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RESULTS OF THE EXAMINATIONS FOR APPROVAL FOR ORAL CREDIT, THE LICENSING OF TEACHERS OF MODERN LANGUAGES

As chairman of the committee on the training and licensing of teachers of our Association I have naturally been very much interested in the results of the written examinations set by the State Department of Education for those teachers of French and German who desire approval for oral credit because it is in effect putting into practice some of the *recommendations made by our committee to this body. The desire on the part of school authorities to secure only teachers of French and German who have the approval for oral credit practically makes it obligatory on those wishing to teach these languages to pass the State examination. This is to all intents and purposes giving successful candidates a license to teach the language in which they passed the examination. Another recommendation of our committee was "that these examinations (for special licenses) shall be inaugurated not later than June, 1916." The first of the examinations for oral credit was conducted in October, 1915. Since that time two other examinations have been held, viz., in April and in October, 1916. It would seem therefore, that the State Education Department is in favor of a special license for teachers of French and German and that the method for obtaining oral credit in these languages, as it is now constituted, will ultimately result in making it absolutely necessary for all teachers of French and German to pass a State examination before they can enter upon their duties in the class-room.

The aim of these State examinations has been to test thoroughly the candidate's knowledge of the language in question. The examinations** thus far given have not only aimed at this; but they have been of such a nature that only those well grounded in the language could pass them. This is as it should be. There are many among those who failed who claim that the examinations

*See Bulletin of the New York State Modern Language Association for January, 1915.

**Specimen papers are appended to this article.

are too difficult, but examinations are always too difficult for those who cannot pass them. The successful candidates are later visited by the specialist in modern languages or his representative and permanent approval is denied those teachers whose work in the class-room shows their inability to use the language orally or whose pedagogical skill is deficient.

The results of these examinations as told by statistics are interesting. They are as follows:

GERMAN EXAMINATIONS*

Date	Number of Candidates	Number Who Passed
October, 1915	179	81 (45½ %)
April, 1916	134	68 (50½ %)
October, 1916	97	50 (51⅓ %)
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	410	199 (48½ %)

FRENCH EXAMINATIONS

Date	Number of Candidates	Number Passing
October, 1915	68	51 (75 %)
April, 1916	55	36 (65½ %)
October, 1916	38	29 (76⅔ %)
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	161	116 (72⅘ %)

*Dr. Price, the State Specialist for Modern Languages, who was kind enough to read the proof of this article made the following statement concerning the statistics offered above:

"These figures do not take into account the very large number of *permanent* approvals given by the State Specialist on the basis of inspection *before* the system of written examinations went into effect. That is, the approval of teachers for credit for oral work in the modern languages has been a *fait accompli* in practically all of the cities (10,000 inhabitants or more) since the school year 1911-12, whereas the written examination system of approving teachers did not go into effect until October, 1915, and it has affected chiefly the small schools of the State. While exact statistics are not available at the present time, it will readily be seen that the number of approved teachers of the modern languages in the State is very much larger than Professor Decker's statistics would indicate (two or three times as large, in my opinion)."

In explanation of the relatively better showing of the French teachers in these examinations, it should be noted (1) that very little French is taught in the State except in the larger and better schools, and (2) that many native French teachers, although their knowledge of the language is practically perfect, have nevertheless been obliged to take the written examination because they failed to measure up to the scholastic requirements of the State Department (i. e., graduation from a college or university recognized by the Regents)."

An analysis of these statistics shows that the total number of candidates who tried the German examinations was nearly three times as large as the total number of those who tried the French examinations and that approximately 52 per cent failed in German while only 28 per cent failed in French. If the German and French examinations are of equal difficulty it would seem that the candidates presenting themselves for examination in French are as a whole better prepared than those who take the German examinations. In German the percentage of successful candidates has steadily increased in spite of the fact that the numbers taking the examinations has decreased. The percentage of successful candidates in French would seem to be on the increase, too, although the number of candidates has decreased by half. In other words, if the difficulty of the examinations in each language has remained the same, the proportion of properly qualified candidates is decidedly on the increase. This is certainly encouraging.

To those who have received approval for oral credit because they passed the written examination must be added those who were exempt from examination because of study abroad or who received the A.M. degree with German or French as a major and pedagogy as a minor subject. The statistics are as follows:

	German	French
October, 1915	52	13
April, 1916	18	10
October, 1916	12	8
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total.....	82	31

It is to be noted that the number of exemptions is rapidly decreasing. Adding these totals to those already shown, it will be seen that approval for oral credit, has been granted to 492 teachers of German and to 230 teachers of French.

It is interesting to note just what relation these figures bear toward the schools of the State. In June, 1916, Regents' examinations in French were conducted in *332 schools and German was given in *729 schools. When one remembers that these figures include the high schools of the large cities of the State where every teacher of French or German has the approval, it

*These figures include a few private and some parochial schools.

will be seen that the total number of approved teachers is still too small to allow one to each school. Actually it means that there is still a large number of schools in the smaller cities and towns where French and German are taught by non-approved teachers. It is also probable that some teachers included in these totals have died while others have discontinued teaching for one reason or another. This fact makes the discrepancy still larger.

A question arises in one's mind concerning the value of these approved teachers to their schools. Are the results obtained by the pupils in the examinations better under the present system than under the former system? To this question we must answer that it is too soon to judge as only one school year has passed since the present method of approval was adopted. I believe that the State specialists in modern languages would give a decidedly affirmative answer to the question as to whether the class-room work of the approved teacher was better than that of the non-approved teacher.

There is another side to the results of these examinations upon which no statistics can be quoted. That is their effect upon the modern language teachers and their position among other teachers. Because I am employed in a State institution whose specific and only purpose is the preparation of teachers for the high schools of this State, I am in position to judge what the effect has been upon those who are preparing themselves to become teachers and upon those who are teachers. Before the present system went into effect in 1915 it was not uncommon for principals and superintendents who came to our institution for the purpose of securing our graduates for their schools to engage them merely as teachers. Frequently the work which these young teachers were to do was not decided upon until a short time before school opened in the fall. Many letters used to come to me from former students who had been assigned to teach German but who realized that they had not sufficient preparation to do so. These students had generally taken only the prescribed amount of German for graduation and had dropped the subject early in their courses. Other students who had majored in German and whose scholarship was excellent were often given no German classes whatever. Last spring and indeed

ever since that time our employment committee has noticed that, however indefinite school authorities might be about the probable duties of teachers of other subjects, they were very specific in asking for a French teacher or a German teacher and they almost always demanded that the teacher have the approval for oral credit. In the German department nine seniors who had majored in German and who had passed the examination last April were all engaged to teach *German* before they graduated in June. During the summer and early fall the employment committee received many more requests for modern language teachers with oral credit. Because we had no more teachers to recommend we were unable to supply teachers for these places. You all know the effect on the price of a commodity when the demand is greater than the supply. One school in a small city went to the unheard of length of offering nine hundred dollars for a German teacher who had the approval for oral credit. Up to this time six hundred fifty dollars had been the maximum. Not one of the nine graduates previously referred to received an offer of less than six hundred dollars while some offers went as high as seven hundred fifty dollars. In other subjects (with the exception of commercial branches) the average salary was lower and the duties not so clearly defined. As far as our students are concerned then, the new system of examination has resulted in even this short time in improving their working conditions and raising their salaries. It is not illogical, I think, to infer that this must be true of the graduates of other institutions in the State which are preparing modern language teachers. Ought not we as an association most enthusiastically to support any system which has such results?

Because it is almost impossible for students not able to pass these examinations to obtain positions upon graduation, the students majoring in modern languages take their work much more seriously than in other departments in which no such test is demanded. Students who are unable or unwilling to do the work necessary to prepare for the examination do not attempt to major in French and German. Again certain courses which were required for a major in German were regarded as superfluous and even the best students would do only the minimum amount of work to pass. Since phonetics have formed a part of the examination, this course is taken much more seriously.

Inquiries made among teachers who have received the approval for oral credit and who are employed in towns and cities where no evidence of special fitness is demanded of the teachers of other subjects, have disclosed the fact that the modern language teachers are regarded as being on a higher professional plane. They alone have been called upon to demonstrate their fitness to do their work before or shortly after entering upon their duties. They have proved their ability by passing a fairly searching examination in their chosen field. The State has set its seal of approval upon them as specialists and put them in the same class as physicians and lawyers. With the increased professional respect accorded them, the professional spirit of the modern language teacher will grow. He will have to live up to his reputation.

In addition to casting aside the unfit, the examinations must necessarily increase the self-confidence of the timid but successful candidates. I have known, too, of their bringing some of the over-confident, who barely passed, to their senses. These two defects are generally to be found in young teachers so that the examinations have a salutary effect upon them at the very beginning of their professional careers.

Thus far the results of the examinations for approval for oral credit seem to have been, (1) an improvement in the working conditions and salaries of modern language teachers, (2) better preparation and (3) a greater professional spirit. It is to be hoped that these results will encourage the State Department and this Association to bend every effort toward making the passing of these examinations a necessary prerequisite of every modern language teacher before he is permitted to enter upon his duties in the class-room.

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The University of the State of New York

EXAMINATION FOR

APPROVAL OF ORAL WORK IN FRENCH

Friday, October 13, 1916—1.15 to 4 p. m., only

Principals are requested to conduct the examination in accordance with the rules governing the conducting of Regents examinations, and to forward the answer papers to the Department immediately after the examination.

Answer four questions

A lire mais non pas à traduire:

LE LABOUREUR

Une gravure d'Holbein représente un *laboureur* conduisant sa charrue au milieu d'un champ. Une vaste campagne s'étend au loin, on y voit de pauvres *cabanes*; le soleil se couche derrière la colline. C'est la fin d'une journée rude de travail. Le paysan est vieux, *trapu*, couvert de *haillons*. L'attelage de quatre chevaux qu'il pousse en avant est maigre, exténué; le *soc* s'enfonce dans un fond *raboteux* et rebelle. Un seul être est *allègre* et *ingambe* dans cette scène: c'est un personnage fantastique, un *squelette* armé d'un *fouet*, qui court dans le *sillon* à côté des chevaux effrayés et les frappe, servant ainsi de valet de charrue au vieux laboureur. C'est la mort, ce spectre qu'Holbein a introduit allégoriquement dans la succession de sujets philosophiques et religieux, à la fois *lugubres* et *bouffons*, intitulée *Les Simulacres de la mort*.

Dans cette collection, ou plutôt dans cette vaste composition où la mort, jouant son rôle à toutes les pages, est le lien et la pensée dominante, Holbein a fait comparaître les *souverains*, les *pontifes*, les amants, les *joueurs*, les *ivrognes*, les nonnes, les courtisanes, les brigands, les pauvres, les guerriers, les moines, les juifs, les voyageurs, tout le monde de son temps et du nôtre; et partout le spectre de la mort raille, menace et triomphe. D'un seul tableau elle est absente. C'est celui où le pauvre Lazare, couché sur un fumier à la porte du riche, déclare qu'il ne la craint pas, sans doute parce qu'il n'a rien à perdre et que sa vie est une mort anticipée.

Cette pensée stoïcienne du Christianisme demi-paien de la Renaissance est-elle bien consolante, et les âmes religieuses y trouvent-elles leur compte? L'ambitieux, le *fourbe*, le tyran, le débauché, tous ces pécheurs superbes qui abusent de la vie, et que la mort tient par les cheveux, vont être punis, sans doute; mais l'*aveugle*, le *mendiant*, le fou, le pauvre paysan, sont-ils dédommagés de leur longue misère par la seule réflexion que la mort n'est pas un mal pour eux? Non! Une tristesse implacable, une effroyable fatalité pèse sur l'œuvre de l'artiste. Cela ressemble à une malédiction amère lancée sur le sort du genre humain.

—George Sand, *La Mare au diable* (L'auteur au lecteur)

1 Donnez la prononciation des mots suivants (en vous servant préférablement de la notation phonétique internationale): milieu, loin, soleil, travail, paysan, haillons, soc, être, ingambe, fouet, sillon, effrayés, lien, moines, raille, stoïcienne, christianisme, demi-paien, aveugle, œuvre. [20]

2 Les mots suivants sont à expliquer, soit par des synonymes ou antonymes, soit par des définitions en français: laboureur, cabanes, trapu, haillons, soc, raboteux, allègre, ingambe, squelette, fouet, sillon, lugubre, bouffon, souverains, pontifes, joueurs, ivrognes, fourbe, aveugle, mendiant. [30]

3 Les locutions suivantes sont à employer dans des phrases complètes ou à expliquer autrement en français de sorte que le sens et l'emploi en soient évidents: déchirer quelqu'un à belle dent; tirer le diable par la queue; donner des coups d'épée dans l'eau; faire le mort; se mettre en grève; se piquer d'honneur; avoir le bras long; avoir mal au cœur; avoir le cœur gros; c'est le coup de pied de l'âne. [20]

4 Ecrire une composition de 150 mots environ sur un sujet quelconque suggéré par le texte; par exemple, (a) La vie du laboureur, (b) La vie du paysan au moyen-âge, (c) La vie et les œuvres de George Sand, (d) Le roman champêtre au 19^e siècle, (e) Le pessimisme et l'optimisme dans la littérature, (f) Choix de lecture et emploi de tableaux dans nos cours de français. [30]

The University of the State of New York

EXAMINATION FOR

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Answer five questions

Zu lesen aber nicht zu übersetzen:

GROSSSTÄDTISCHE UND KLEINSTÄDTISCHE UNIVERSITÄTEN

Wir wollen *keineswegs* in *Abrede* stellen, dass die grossen Städte mit ihrem *geselligen Verkehr*, mit ihren Kunstschatzen, Bibliotheken, Museen und *industriellen Anstalten* eine sehr bequeme Umschau eine wahre Universalität alles Wissenswürdigen bieten, aber es scheint uns, dass dieser Vorteil mehr für die Professoren als für die Studenten anzusehen ist. Es kommt für die letzteren auf der Hochschule doch vorzüglich nur auf eine Orientierung in dem *Labyrinth der neuen Bildung* an; wie aber soll *der für alles gleich empfängliche Jüngling* mitten zwischen der überwältigenden Masse des Verschiedenartigsten in Kunst und Wissenschaft in den grossen Residenzstädten sich wahrhaft entscheiden, wo jedes natürliche Verhältnis zwischen Lehrer und Schüler, wie es in den kleinen Universitätsstädten stattfindet, durch den betäubenden Lärm und *die allgemeine Zerfahrenheit der Residenz ganz unmöglich* wird? Sogar die grossen Bibliotheken kann nur *der Gelehrte*, der sich bereits für ein bestimmtes Studium entschieden und *gehörig* vorbereitet hat, mit Nutzen gebrauchen. Der unerfahrene Student kommt sich darin vor wie ein Reisender, der hastig eine reiche Bildergalerie durchlaufen hat und zuletzt nicht mehr weiss, was er gesehen hat. Endlich ist zu bemerken, dass das Leben in einer kleinen Universitätsstadt eine Art von Republik bildet. Es ist ein brüderlicher Verein *ohne* Rücksicht auf die Unterschiede der Provinz, des Ranges, des Standes oder des Reichtums, wo den Niedriggeborenen die Überlegenheit des Geistes und Charakters zum Senior über Fürsten und Grafen

erhebt. Diese uralte Bedeutung der Universitäten wird von der in ganz anderen Bahnen kreisenden *Grossstädterei* notwendig verwischt.

—Nach Eichendorff, *Erlebtes* (Halle und Heidelberg)

1 Akzent und Vokallänge folgender Wörter sind anzugeben (Wenn Sie können, geben Sie die Aussprache in phonetischer Umschrift): Universitäten, Bibliotheken, Museen, bequeme, vorzüglich, Studium, Republik, Verein, uralte, Charakter. [10]

2 Alle Fragen sind auf deutsch zu beantworten:

a Ändern Sie den zweitletzten Satz von *ohne . . . erhebt* so, dass Sie dafür zwei Relativsätze einsetzen, die beginnen: *in welchem . . . und in welchem nicht . . ., sondern derjenige . . ., der . . .* [4]

b Erklären Sie durch Synonyme: (1) Wir wollen *keineswegs* in *Abrede* stellen [2], (2) der für alles empfängliche Jüngling [1], (3) gehörig [1].

c Nennen Sie dreierlei *industrielle Anstalten*. [3]

d Definieren Sie: *Museen, Residenz, der Gelehrte*. [6]

e Umschreiben Sie auf leicht verständliche Weise die Ausdrücke: (1) geselliger Verkehr, (2) Labyrinth der neuen Bildung, (3) die allgemeine Zerfahrenheit der Residenz, (4) Grossstädterei. [8]

3 Antworten Sie auf deutsch:

a Was ist eine (deutsche) Hochschule? Was für andere Schulen gibt es in Deutschland? [5]

b Beschreiben Sie in etwa 50 Worten den Bildungsgang eines deutschen Studenten vom 6. bis etwa zum 23. Jahre. [15]

4 Ergänzen Sie folgende Sätze: [15]

a Er zitterte . . . Aufregung.

b Herr Schmidt ist Professor . . . der Universität Berlin.

c Er tötete ihn . . . Eifersucht.

d Ich erkannte ihn . . . seinem roten Haar.

e Ihm standen die Haare . . . Berge.

f Die Dame ist sehr stolz . . . ihr schönes Haar.

g Kümmere dich . . . deine eigenen Angelegenheiten.

h Ich freue mich . . . deine Antwort.

- i* Ich sehne mich . . . Ruhe.
- j* Er sann . . . das Zusammentreffen . . . der Dame . . .
- k* Er erkundigte sich . . . seinem Freund . . . Herrn Schmidt.
- l* Ich tue das . . . keiner Bedingung.

5 Schreiben Sie einen deutschen Aufsatz von ungefähr 125 Wörtern über Ihr Universitätsleben (oder über das Leben an einer Ihnen bekannten Universität), etwa nach folgendem Schema: [30]

- a* Die Stadt (oder das Dorf); die Umgebung.
- b* Das Studium.
- c* Gesellschaftlicher Verkehr; Zerstreuungen.